

## INFORMATION REPORT

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25X1A

COUNTRY Korea

DATE DISTR. 7 NOV 50

SUBJECT Developments on the Hongui-USSR Railroad

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209

1. Although work on the railroad line from Hongui (130-30, 42-25), between Chongjin (129-49, 41-46) and Najindong (130-19, 42-12), to the border of the USSR was scheduled to be completed by the end of May 1950\*, no track had been laid over the route up to the end of July. The bridge across the Tumen River was finished, however, and the railway bed was ninety percent ready for the laying of track. The track was to come from removal of one of two tracks linking Seoul and Simiju (124-24, 40-06). Part of the rails had arrived and by the end of July had been placed along the roadbed in readiness for laying.
2. The construction work is being directed by five Soviet technicians with measuring devices (not specified) and other engineering tools. They are apparently living in various districts in the vicinity of Hongui, for they commute to work areas by car.
3. Labor for the project is supplied under a provincial labor conscription program, obligating the province to supply labor for certain projects. In this case, each household in North Hamgyong Province is required to furnish fifteen days of labor every two months. Laborers are paid 30 North Korean won per day, from which 21 won is deducted for food at the common mess hall and one won for life insurance, leaving a take-home pay of 8 won. Laborers also receive ten cigarettes a week and are housed in freight cars at unstated points.
4. An epidemic in January 1950 struck the workers and caused a large number of deaths. Work was stopped for 20 days, by the order of KIM Tu-p'ong, chairman of the presidium of the North Korean Supreme People's Committee.
5. Since the beginning of the North Korean-South Korean war, the younger men among the workers have been conscripted for service in the army or other military organizations and have been replaced by women and older men.
6. About 10 July, a large (undetermined) number of persons, including Japanese and Soviets, were observed transporting wooden cases which were believed to be ammunition by truck, wagon, and peddlers' pack from the Tumen River area toward

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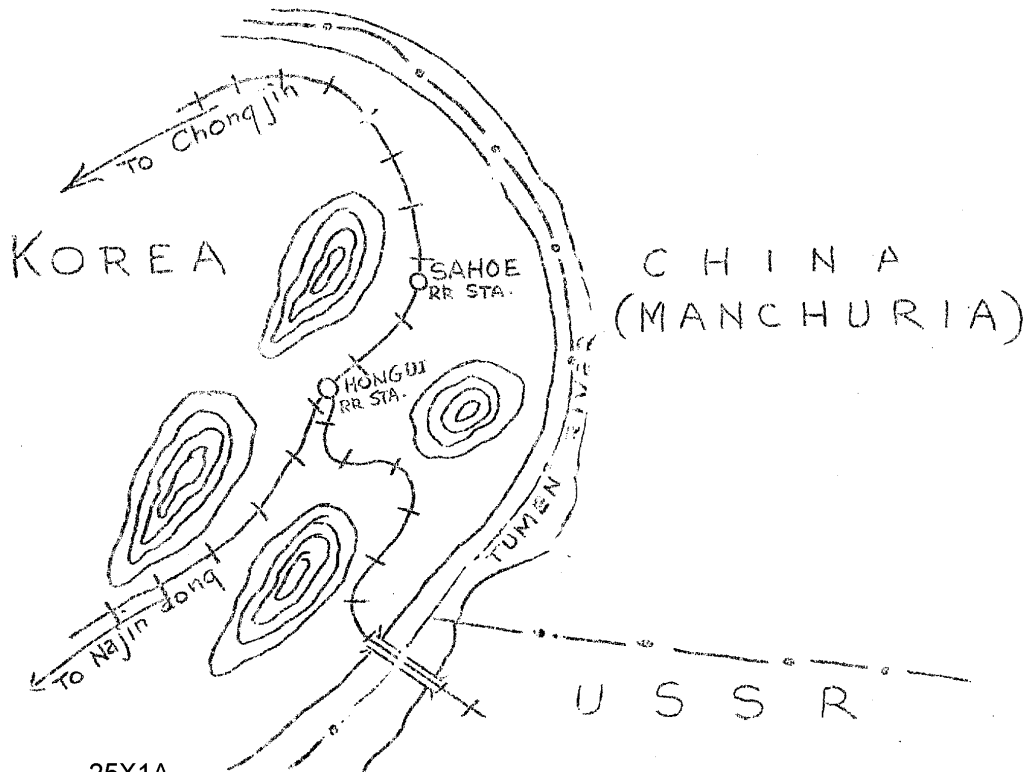
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Hongui. The activity continued day and night for at least two days.

7. A sketch of the line follows:



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\* [REDACTED] Comment. This work was reported to have been scheduled for completion by the end of April. The Tumen River bridge was to be constructed by the USSR; see SC-10270.

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